The Weaponization of "Disinformation" Pseudo-Experts and Bureaucrats: How the Federal Government Partnered with Universities to Censor Americans' Political Speech

The House Judiciary Committee and Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government released an interim staff report on November 6, 2023. The report shows how the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the Global Engagement Center (GEC, State Department) coordinated directly with Stanford University and other entities to create the Election Integrity Partnership to censor Americans' speech in the lead-up to the 2020 election.

- **The Election Integrity Partnership (EIP):** The Election Integrity Partnership (EIP) was created in the summer of 2020 to provide a way for the federal government to launder its censorship activities in hopes of bypassing both the First Amendment and public scrutiny.

  o "External stakeholders," including federal agencies and organizations funded by the federal government, submitted misinformation reports directly to the EIP. The EIP's misinformation "analysts" then scoured the internet for additional examples of similar content for censorship. The EIP sent the most significant ones directly to Big Tech with *specific* recommendations on how social media platforms should censor the posts.

- **CISA's Involvement in Creation & Operation of EIP:** The report reveals for the first time internal emails from EIP members stating that EIP was created "at the request of DHS/CISA." The Committee and Select Subcommittee have also obtained documents showing that CISA had access to the inner workings of the EIP, including incoming misinformation reports.

- **Secret "Jira Tickets" Publicly Released:** The report discloses hundreds of the nonpublic "misinformation" reports from the EIP's centralized reporting system, known as "Jira tickets." During the EIP's operation, the Jira ticketing system was accessible only to select parties, including federal agencies, universities, and Big Tech.

- **Who was censored?** The EIP targeted Americans across the political spectrum, but especially conservatives. This includes candidates such as President Trump and Senator Tillis, entities such as Newsmax and the Babylon Bee, and conservative commentators such as Sean Hannity, Mollie Hemingway, and Charlie Kirk.

- **What was censored?** The EIP targeted true information, jokes, and political opinions.

- **Stanford's Refusal to Cooperate:** Stanford initially refused to produce the Jira tickets even though they were directly responsive to a subpoena. Facing contempt, Stanford relented and produced Jira tickets containing thousands of links the EIP collected for censorship.